

IN THE CLAIMS

1-23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim ~~23~~ 30, wherein said catalytic converter shell is disposed within said manifold wall such that said catalytic converter shell is locked into position within said manifold wall to form a gas tight seal.

25. (Currently Amended) The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim ~~23~~ 30, wherein said manifold wall comprises a manifold wall thickness greater than a catalytic converter shell thickness of said catalytic converter shell.

26. (Previously Presented) The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim 25, wherein said manifold wall thickness is 3 mm to 4 mm, and said catalytic converter shell thickness is 1mm to 2 mm.

27. (Currently Amended) The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim ~~23~~ 30, wherein ~~said manifold wall is metallurgically bound to~~ said catalytic converter shell is cast within an end of said manifold wall.

28. (Currently Amended) The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim ~~23~~ 30, wherein said portion of said catalytic converter shell comprises a retention feature selected from the group consisting of bumps, flares, grooves, and any combination comprising at least one of the foregoing.

29. (Currently Amended) The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim ~~23~~ 30, wherein said manifold comprises cast iron and said catalytic converter shell comprises stainless steel.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~The catalytic converter subassembly of Claim 23, further comprising:~~

A catalytic converter subassembly comprising:  
an exhaust manifold comprising a manifold wall;  
a catalytic converter shell, wherein a portion of said catalytic converter shell is disposed within said manifold wall;  
a catalyst substrate disposed in said catalytic converter shell;  
a mat support material disposed between said catalytic converter shell and said catalyst substrate; and  
a mat protection ring, wherein a first portion of said mat protection ring is disposed in said manifold wall and a second portion of said mat protection ring penetrates at least a portion of ~~is in physical communication with~~ said mat support material at one end.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Cancelled)